VICTIMS PROGRAMS

STATUS REPORT

2003/2004

Alberta
SOLICITOR GENERAL

106-02764/

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REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Grants totaling $2,009,332 were provided to 81 victim assistance programs in fiscal year 2003/04. Of this, $995,887 was paid out to applicants applying for funding in the 2003/04 fiscal year. The remaining $1,013,445 were for programs that received multi-year grants in previous years.

- Seventy-two percent (72%) or $1,445,537 of grant funds for 2003/04 applicants were provided to police-based (RCMP, municipal police, and First Nations police) programs.

- Twenty-eight percent (28%) or $563,795 of grant funds were provided to community programs and projects.

- As of July 27, 2004, Alberta's network of police-based victim assistance programs consisted of 75 programs operating 107 victim service units. Not all police-based victim assistance programs received funding in 2003/04.

- Victim service programs reported handling 32,072 new cases. Over half (55%) involved assisting victims of violent crime.

- Programs reported providing services to 40,784 people in 2003/04, of which 33,256 (82%) were adults and 7,528 (18%) were children.

- The type of assistance most frequently provided for new and ongoing cases was providing information.

- Approximately 1,609 volunteer advocates and Board members contributed a total of 238,507 volunteer hours.

- Providing general assistance (information, crisis intervention and referrals), accounted for 50% of volunteers' time.

- A total of 2,654 Victim Impact Statements were completed by victims of crime and, of those, 2,333 were forwarded to the Crown Prosecutor's Office once charges were laid.

- Victim Impact Statements were most often completed and filed in cases of common assault , domestic assault and sexual assault.

- During the year, 1,577 Requests for Restitution were completed and returned to the police. Of these, 1,488 were forwarded to the Crown. The majority (66%) of requests concerned non-violent crimes.

VICTIMS OF CRIME ACT

History

The *Victims' Programs Assistance Act,* proclaimed January 16, 1991, established the Victims Programs Assistance Fund and provided for the appointment of a Victims Programs Assistance Committee. The Committee was established to review grant applications for programs and services that benefit victims of crime and to make recommendations respecting funding to the Solicitor General.

The *Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)* was proclaimed August 1, 1997, for all provisions of the *Act*, except those directly associated with the delivery of financial benefits to individual victims of crime. On November 1, 1997, the financial benefits section was proclaimed. The *Victims of Crime Act* replaced the *Victims' Programs Assistance Act* and *Criminal Injuries Compensation Act*, and established the authority to collect surcharges of 15% on provincial statute offences.

A Fund into which provincial and federal surcharges are collected and deposited was also established under *VOCA*. Section 10 of the *Act* provides for payments from the Fund. Expenditures include grants approved by the Solicitor General, costs incurred by the Victims of Crime Programs Committee, the Criminal Injuries Review Board, expenses to persons whose services are engaged by the Solicitor General, and financial benefits payable to victims of crime for injuries suffered. Salaries, benefits and other expenditures related to the administration of the *Act* are also paid from the Fund.

The *Act* includes principles respecting the treatment of victims and, establishes entitlements for victims to obtain certain information.

An office of the Director, *VOCA*, was created. This office operates within the Public Security Division, under the Department of the Solicitor General, and is responsible for the administration of the *Act*. Victims who do not feel they have been treated in accordance with the principles of the *Act* can obtain information from this office as to how to resolve their concerns.

Two core programs operate under *VOCA* - a financial benefits program for individual victims who have suffered injury as a result of a criminal offence, and a grants program that provides funding to groups and organizations offering information, assistance and support to victims during their involvement in the criminal justice process.

The *Act* established the Victims of Crime Programs Committee appointed by the Solicitor General. The Committee evaluates applications for grants to programs and makes recommendations to the Solicitor General on grant funding. Funding decisions made by the Solicitor General are based upon the Committee's recommendations.

VICTIMS OF CRIME PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Committee Members

The Committee consists of four members, with two members representing the community at-large, one member representing police, and one member representing government.

Members during 2003/2004 were:

Mr. Richard Smedstad (Chairman), member-at-large, Sherwood Park, Alberta;
Ms. Donna Huestis (RCMP K Division, Edmonton), representing police;
Ms. Diane Wickenheiser, member-at-large, Hays, Alberta;
Mr. Peter Teasdale (Alberta Justice), representing government

Committee Meetings

Meetings are scheduled twice per year to evaluate grant applications submitted for the April 1st and October 1st application deadlines. The Committee met on June 5th and 6th, 2003 and December 4th and 5th, 2003. Forty-six new grant applications were evaluated by the Committee and 45 applications were approved for funding by the Solicitor General in the amount of $1,157,834.

FUNDING AGREEMENTS

Programs approved for funding are required to enter into agreements that outline terms and conditions to be met. In accordance with the agreement, funded programs are required to submit quarterly statistics, financial statements, and an evaluation report upon expiry of their funding term.

Grant Funding Formula

On October 1, 1999, a new grant funding formula was introduced to help ensure that grant monies are allocated fairly and equitably throughout the province. The formula is used to calculate a base funding amount for eligible programs. The formula:

- Allocates a specified amount from the Victims of Crime Fund to police-based programs that provide basic services; and

- Utilizes a per crime amount that has been calculated using violent crime statistics from Uniform Crime Report data submitted to the Department of the Solicitor General by all police services.

Police-based programs may receive additional funding if any of the following discretionary factors apply:

- large geographical area/low population density;

- unique demographics;
- weaker economic base;
- lack of other support services;
- new programs/projects; and
- other special circumstances that may be identified by the applicant.

Eligible specialized community programs/projects that benefit victims during the criminal justice process and are non-police-based are also eligible for discretionary funding.

Eligible programs may receive a minimum grant of $2,000 and a maximum of $75,000 per year.

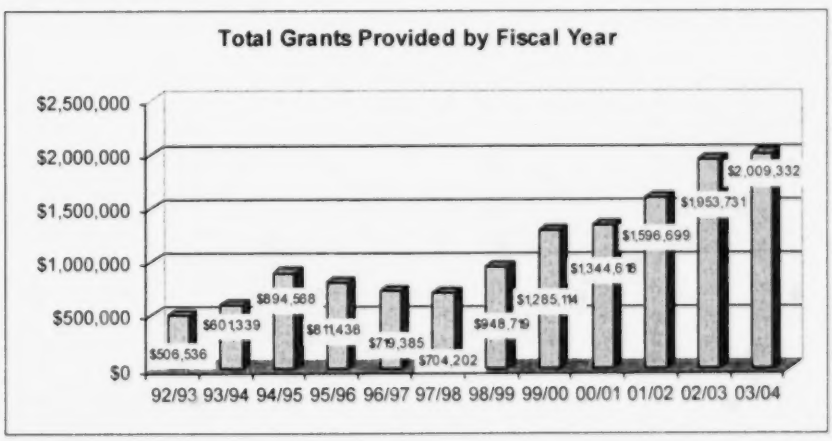
The 2003/2004 fiscal year was the fifth year that eligible programs received multi-year grant funding commitments allowing them to budget for the future. To be considered eligible, an established program must have operated successfully for three years in a partnership with Alberta Solicitor General, met the conditions of previous funding agreements, and demonstrated sound management practices.

Grants Provided

Grants totaling $2,009,332 were provided to 81 programs for the 2003/2004 year. This was a 3% increase in grant funds provided from 2002/2003 and was the highest dollar amount in 13 years (Figure 1). Of the programs that received funding, 47 were provided grants for a one year term or received the first installment of a multi-year grant for a total of $995,887. The remaining 34 programs were provided multi-year funding in either 2001/02 or 2002/2003 and received their second or third year installments for a total of $1,013,445 for the 2003/2004 year.

Grants to police-based victim assistance programs accounted for 72%, or $1,445,537 of the total grants allocated in 2003/2004. Of that amount, 77% or $1,115,037 was provided to RCMP affiliated victim service units, 19% or $273,000 was provided to municipal police services, and the remaining 4% or $57,500 was provided to First Nations police services.

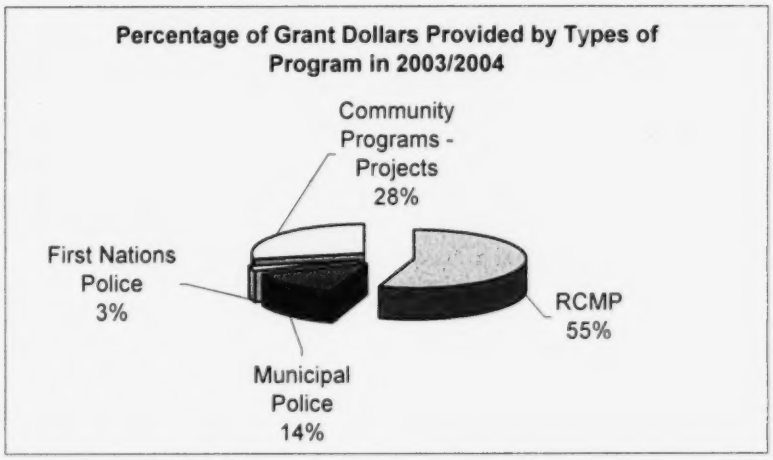
Figure 1



Police Based Programs

Police-based programs receive funding priority, although community programs that provide services to victims also receive funding. Of the total grant funds provided to both police-based and community victim assistance programs in 2003/2004, RCMP victim service units received 55% of the total grant funds, Municipal Police received 14% and First Nations Police received 3%. Community programs received 28% of the total grant funds provided, or $563,795. (Figure 2)

Figure 2


Percentage of Grant Dollars Provided by Types of Program in 2003/2004
Community Programs - Projects 28%
First Nations Police 3%
RCMP 55%
Municipal Police 14%

As a result of community support and grants from the Victims of Crime Fund, a network of police-based victim assistance programs has been established that provides access to services for victims in 96% of the province (Appendix A). Three new police-based programs were approved for funding: Blood Tribe Victim Services Unit, Fort Macleod and District Victim Services Association and Mackenzie Regional Community Policing Society. As of July 27 2004, there were 75 police-based victims programs operating a total of 107 victims service units in Alberta.

Services provided to victims include intervention and support, information about their case and criminal justice proceedings, information about medical, legal and social services that can help, referrals to other community agencies, and court room orientation and accompaniment. These programs also provide victims of crime with information and assistance in completing victim impact statements, requesting restitution, and applying for financial benefits. Police-based programs provide a continuum of services to victims from the time of first response by police to the disposition of the case by the Courts, and provide services in accordance with provincial guidelines.

Police Based Programs

The following grants were provided for police-based programs in 2003/04:

Bashaw RCMP Victim Assistance Society	***$5,000***
Battle River Victim Assistance Society	***$30,000***
Beaverlodge RCMP Victims Assistance	***$11,500***
Blood Tribe Victim Service Unit	***$22,500***
Bonnyville RCMP Victim Services	***$18,000***
Bow Island/Foremost Victim Services	***$5,000***
Brooks & District Victims' Assistance Association	***$26,850***
Camrose & District Victim Services Society	***$10,000***
Chinook Arch Victim's Services Society	***$25,000***
Cold Lake Victim Services Society	***$15,000***
Foothills Regional Victim Services Association	***$25,000***
Fort Macleod & District Victim Services Association	***$15,000***
Grande Cache Victim Services Society	***$8,000***
Heartland Victim Services Unit Society	***$8,450***
High Level Community Policing Society	***$30,000***
High Prairie & District RCMP Victims Assistance	***$45,000***
Highway 43 RCMP Victims' Services Unit Society	***$30,000***
Hinton District Victim Services Society	***$22,000***
Innisfail Victim Service Unit	***$8,000***
Lacombe Victim Services	***$10,000***
Mackenzie Regional Community Policing Society	***$30,000***
Peace River Victim Services Society	***$35,000***
Pincher Creek & District Victim Assistance Society	***$20,000***
Ponoka Victims Services Association	***$10,000***

Red Deer Rural Victim Assistance Society	***$7,500***
Redcliff RCMP Victim Service Unit	***$5,000***
Rimbey & District RCMP Victim Services	***$5,000***
Rocky & District RCMP Victim Services Unit Society	***$23,000***
St. Albert Victim Services Association	***$20,000***
Slave Lake Victim Services Society	***$30,000***
Sylvan Lake & District Victim Services Association	***$6,000***
Taber/Vauxhall Victim Service Unit	***$11,000***
Three Hills Victims Assistance Program	***$2,005***
Vulcan Regional Victim Services Society	***$5,000***
Wetaskiwin & District Victim Services Society	***$40,000***
Total	***619,805***

In addition to the grants listed above, the Victims of Crime Fund also supported the following police-based programs which were awarded multi-year grants in 2000/2001, 2001/2002, or 2002/2003:

• ***Airdrie & District Victim Assistance Society***	***$20,000***
• ***Athabasca Regional Victim Services Society***	***$19,000***
• ***Barrhead Community Victim Services Unit Association***	***$11,500***
• ***Big Country Victim Services Association***	***$30,000***
• ***Calgary Police Service Victim Assistance Unit***	***$75,000***
• ***Cardium Region Victim Services Unit***	***$27,000***
• ***Cochrane & Area Victim Services Society (CAVSS)***	***$25,000***
• ***Crisis Association of Vegreville***	***$10,900***
• ***Edmonton Police Service***	***$75,000***
• ***Edson and District Victim Services Society***	***$15,000***
• ***Fort McMurray Victim Services Society***	***$40,000***
• ***Grande Prairie & District RCMP Victims' Assistance Program Association***	***$40,000***
• ***Highway 43 RCMP Victims' Services Unit Society***	***$30,000***
• ***Lac La Biche Society, Victims Services Unit***	***$35,000***
• ***Leduc and District Victim Assistance Society***	***$19,492***
• ***Lesser Slave Lake Regional Police Service***	***$25,000***
• ***Lethbridge Detachment Victim Assistance Society***	***$ 3,500***
• ***Lethbridge Police Service Victim/Witness Services Unit***	***$57,000***
• ***Lloydminster Regional Victim Services***	***$15,000***
• ***Louis Bull Police Service***	***$10,000***
• ***Medicine Hat Police Service***	***$35,000***

- ***St. Paul and Area Victim Services Society*** ***$40,000***
- ***Strathcona County RCMP Victim Services Unit*** ***$14,000***
- ***Strathmore Regional Victim Services Unit*** ***$30,000***
- ***Victim Services Society of Stony Plain, Spruce Grove and District*** ***$40,000***
- ***Victim Services Unit (Assoc.) - Sturgeon Re[illegible]n*** ***$17,340***
- ***Volunteer Programs Assoc.—Fort Saskatchewan*** ***$18,000***
- ***Wabasca Regional Victim Services Society*** ***$30,000***
- ***Westlock Community Services Unit Association*** ***$18,000***

Total ***$825,732***

Total Grants Approved or Provided to Police-based Programs in 2003/2004 ***$1,445,537***

Community Programs

Non-police-based, or community programs, usually offer more specialized services. Grants may be awarded to programs that provide specialized services to victims of a particular type of crime, for example, domestic violence, or they may be awarded on a one-time basis for projects. Grants were provided to the following groups in 2003/2004:

ASSIST Community Services Centre ***$29,011***
ASSIST (formerly the Chinese Community Services Centre) provides outreach services to Edmonton's Chinese community. This grant was provided to deliver culturally and linguistically relevant crisis intervention and outreach services for victims of crime in Edmonton's Chinese and Asian communities, as well as public education and enhanced community partnerships.

Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse (CCASA) ***$36,000***
CCASA program helps sexual abuse victims through the court process, and ensures court accompaniment. CCASA also provides individual and group counseling, school-based and community education programs, a hospital call-out service, as well as a 24-hour crisis line. This grant was provided to assist with the continuation of CCASA's Court Preparation Program and to provide support to victims of sexual assault.

Canadian Society for the Investigation of Child Abuse ***$50,000***
The Canadian Society for the Investigation of Child Abuse's primary goal is to maximize the effectiveness of the investigative and criminal prosecution systems and minimize the trauma to child victims and their families in Calgary and surrounding areas. The grant was provided for the Child Witness Preparation Program which assists victimized children to testify truthfully and effectively in court.

Central Alberta Victims' Assistance Society (CAVAS) ***$25,000***
CAVAS works together with 13 community member units in central Alberta (Rimbey, Innisfail, Ponoka, Camrose, Bashaw, Red Deer Rural, Stettler, Rocky Mountain House, Sylvan Lake, Wetaskiwin, Breton,

Drayton Valley and Evansburg) to assist victims of crime and tragedy. The goals and objectives are to: create and maintain policies, procedures and service guidelines; share information, network and address issues; as well as conduct developmental training on an ongoing and supporting basis. Funding was provided to continue to develop initiatives that leads to the highest level of professionalism, uniformity and productivity for its members.

Edmonton John Howard Society ***$12,900***

The Edmonton John Howard Society's Victims' Assistance Program provides information and support to victims and witnesses of crime as they go through the criminal court process. In April, 2003, the focus of the program was changed to specialize in providing services to victims of abuse appearing in the new Domestic Violence Courts. This grant was provided to support the delivery of the John Howard Society's Victims' Assistance Program. This program provides assistance, information, referrals, court preparation and support to victims of domestic violence in the city of Edmonton.

K Country Conference Committee formerly Canmore Conference Committee ***$9,361***

The K Country Conference is an annual event that provides advanced victim services training to volunteer victim advocates and program coordinators. This educational event also presents opportunities for volunteers and program coordinators to network and share their knowledge and skills with others working in the field of victim services and crisis intervention. This grant was provided to assist with costs associated with organizing and hosting the conference for southern Alberta victims service units' front-line volunteers and program coordinators.

Lloydminister Sexual Assault & Information Centre (LSAIC) ***$12,000***

The primary role of LSAIC is to provide crisis intervention, support and education to victims and survivors of sexual abuse. Services provided by LSAIC include accompanying victims to the hospital, the police, and preparing and accompanying sexual assault victims to court. The objectives of the Crisis Intervention/Victim Witness Program are to reduce the trauma for sexual assault victims by providing them with support and knowledge, to encourage victims to access referral networks, and to engage victims in a follow-up process and group recovery. Funding was provided to help operate the Centre's Crisis Intervention/Victim Witness Program

P.A.C.E. (Providing Assistance, Counselling & Education) ***$21,800***

P.A.C.E. provides counseling, education and assistance to victims, offenders and families of sexual assault and abuse, as well as persons in distress. This grant was awarded to provide court preparation, support and accompaniment to victims of sexual assault in the Grande Prairie, Valleyview and Fairview areas.

Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (SACE) ***$40,000***

The Sexual Assault Center of Edmonton provides essential, specialized and cost effective sexual assault services aimed at both preventing the sexual assault and offering healing and recovery to those whom have been a victim of the sexual crime. The Centre assists in empowering victims affected by sexual abuse and assault, as well as assists communities to take action against sexual abuse. This grant was provided to help fund SACE's Diversity Outreach Program, which provides culturally sensitive and language specific services to victims, as well as workshops to ethno-cultural communities, including Aboriginal and Asian victims and communities.

Sexual Assault Investigators' Conference Planning Committee ***$30,000***

The Sexual Assault Investigators' Conference's purpose is to increase investigators skills and knowledge on how to investigate sexual assault cases and work more effectively with sexual assault victims. In addition, the Conference raises awareness on community resources and developing community partnerships. This grant was provided to coordinate a sexual assault investigators' conference.

Tsuu T'ina Nation Band—Stoney Corrections Society ***$35,000***

The Tsuu T'ina Nation Band– Stoney Corrections Society provides information regarding legal aspects of the courtworker and probation programs, strives to ensure all nation members receive fair and equitable treatment within the judicial system, and works towards developing a Crime Prevention Program promoting culture, traditions and spirituality. The grant was provided to develop a victim services program which would include a full-time position and recruit and coordinate volunteers from the community.

Zebra Child Protection Centre Society ***$75,000***

The Zebra Child Protection Centre was developed by members of the Edmonton Police Service, Child Protection Section, and co-professionals involved in the investigation of child maltreatment. The mandate of the Centre is to ensure that a multi-disciplinary and comprehensive investigation is conducted in the least intrusive and most protective environment possible. The program's advocates are specially trained to address the needs of child victims of physical and sexual abuse and their families. Funding was provided to assist child victims through the investigation and supporting them through the healing process.

Total ***$376,072***

In addition, a Victims of Crime Fund grant also supported the following community programs which received multi-year grants in either 2000/2001, 2001/2002, 2002/2003.

• ***Alberta Provincial Victim Services Conference***	***$15,000***
• ***Alberta Police-Based Victim Services Association***	***$68,500***
• ***Calgary Legal Guidance/YWCA of Calgary***	***$37,500***
• ***Crisis Centre (formerly Central Alberta Sexual Assault Centre)***	***$36,000***
• ***Partner Support Program***	***$30,723***
Total	***$187,723***
Total Grants Approved or Provided to Community Programs in 2003/2004	***$563,795***
Total Grants Provided in 2003/2004	***$2,009,332***

PROGRAM ACTIVITY

Introduction

Information on the activities of victims service programs was collected using the Quarterly Report form. The Report collects information on the number of new cases, the number of persons assisted, and the type of assistance provided. For each of these variables, the Report categorizes assistance provided as either *Criminal Code – Violent* (e.g. homicide, violent sex offences, serious assaults, etc.), *Criminal Code – Non-violent* (e.g. forgery, fraud, theft, etc.), *Offence Non-criminal* (offences that do not fall within the *Criminal Code of Canada*, i.e., Provincial Statute Offences) or *Assistance – No offence* (e.g. sudden death, notifying next-of-kin, motor vehicle collisions, suicide, etc.).

The Report also measures the number of volunteer hours, the number of victim impact statements completed and forwarded to the Crown prosecutor's office, and the number of restitution requests completed and forwarded to the Crown prosecutor.

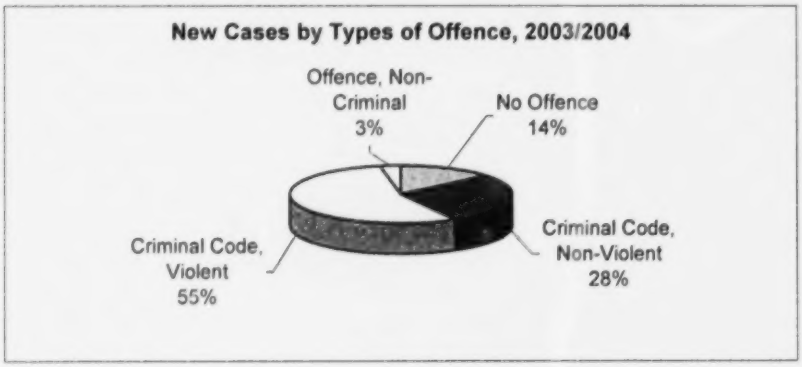
The statistics were collected from quarterly report forms submitted by police based victim service units and community programs. Conditional funding agreements stipulate that all victim service units that receive a Victims of Crime Fund grant are required to submit quarterly statistics.

New Cases

During the 2003/2004 fiscal year, victim service programs reported handling 32,072 new cases. This was a 5% increase compared to 2002/2003 and the highest number of new cases in five years. New cases refer only to those cases (files) opened during the reporting period. A case may involve one or more victims, as well as family members or friends affected by an incident of crime.

Of the 32,072 new cases, over half (55%) involved assisting victims of *Criminal Code-Violent* offences (Figure 3). Assistance was least often provided when the offence was *Non-Criminal* which includes Drugs, Federal Statutes, Provincial Acts and Municipal Bylaws

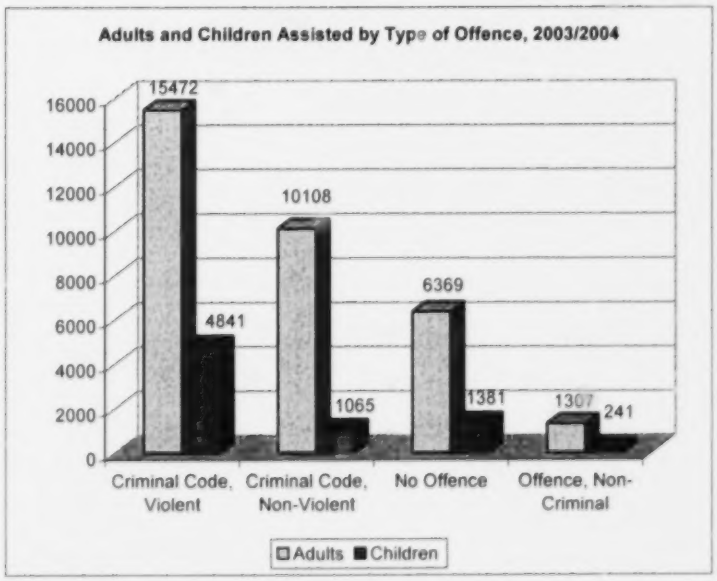
Figure 3


New Cases by Types of Offence, 2003/2004
Offence, Non-Criminal 3%
No Offence 14%
Criminal Code, Non-Violent 28%
Criminal Code, Violent 55%

Persons Assisted

Programs reported providing assistance to 40,784 people in 2003/2004, which is a 6% increase compared to 2002/2003. Of the persons assisted, 33,256 (82%) were adults and 7,528 (18%) were children. Approximately half of the people assisted (50%) were victims of a *Criminal Code – Violent* offence, followed by people assisted in the *Criminal Code – Non-violent* offence category (27%) (Figure 4). There were five year highs in both the number of persons assisted that were victims of a *Criminal Code–Violent* offence (3% increase compared to 2002/2003) as well as victims of a *Criminal Code-Non-Violent* offence (10% increase compared to 2002/2003).

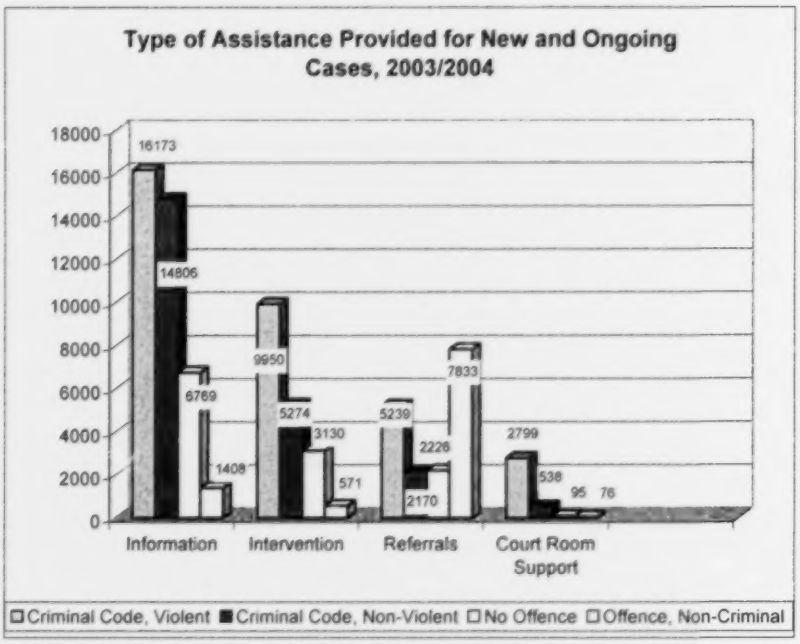
Figure 4



Type of Assistance

The type of assistance most frequently provided for new and ongoing cases was providing information. Intervention, which includes crisis response, notification of next of kin, or practical assistance at a crime scene was the second most common type of assistance provided. This was followed by referrals to other agencies. While Court Room Support was provided in the least number of cases, whether new or ongoing, compared to other types of assistance (Figure 5), in 2003/2004, Court Room Support was at a five year high for *Criminal Code-Violent*, *Criminal Code-Non-Violent*, *No Offence*, and *Offence Non-Criminal* categories.

Figure 5



In comparing assistance provided in *Non-Violent* versus *Violent* Criminal Code Offences, assistance was most often provided when the incident/offence was in the *Violent Criminal Code* category. Assistance, with the exception of referrals, was least likely to be provided where the incident/offence was in the *Non-Criminal* Offence category.

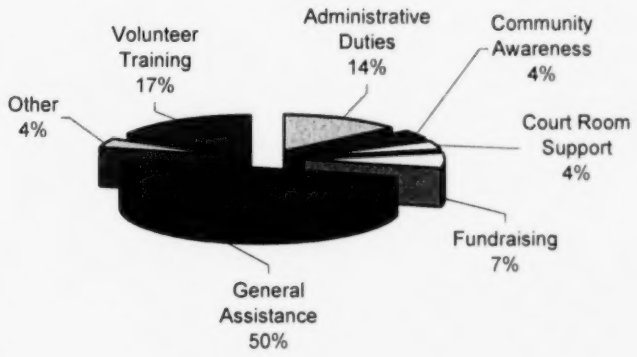
Volunteer Hours

In 2003/2004, approximately 1,609 volunteer advocates and Board members contributed a total of 238,507 volunteer hours. This equates to approximately 126 people working full time for a one year period. This figure includes hours volunteered by program staff over and above their paid time. While there has been a 10% reduction in the number of volunteer advocates, there has been an 8% increase in the number of volunteer hours compared to 2002/2003. During 2003/2004, on average, programs employed 65 full-time and 76 part-time paid staff.

Providing general assistance (information, intervention and referrals) to victims accounted for 50% of volunteer time. Seventeen percent (17%) of volunteer hours were dedicated to volunteer training, followed by administrative duties, at 14%. The remaining hours were spent on fundraising (7%), community awareness (4%), other activities such as meetings and travel time (4%), and court room support (4%) (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Volunteer Hours, 2003/2004



ALBERTA SOLICITOR GENERAL & INITIATIVES

Victim Impact Statement Program

The Victim Impact Statement Program provides victims in Alberta with the opportunity to have input into sentencing by describing in writing, to the Court, how they have been affected by the crime.

Police notify all victims of crime of this opportunity and provide information about the nearest victim service unit, where the Victim Impact Statement Form and assistance in completing it can be obtained. The completed statements are returned to the police or victim service unit, who review the statement and forward it to the Crown prosecutor. As of December 1, 1999, victims have the option of reading their statements aloud in court. If the victim has chosen to do so, the police or victim services notify the victim of the court dates for sentencing. Prior to sentencing, the Court is required to inquire if the victim has been advised of the opportunity to prepare a statement, and may adjourn proceedings to permit the victim to prepare a statement.

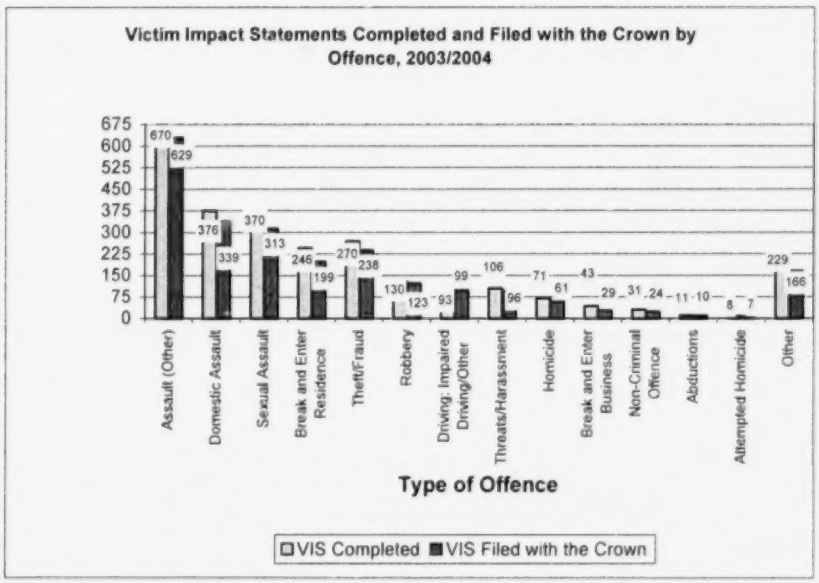
Revised Victim Impact Statement Procedures

In 2003/2004, revised Victim Impact Statement procedures were developed and distributed to victim service units and community programs, Crown Prosecutors, court services, correction services, and police services for implementation. Two major changes occurred in Victim Impact Statement procedures: Victim Impact Statements are not

disclosed until after a finding of guilt and are now sent directly to the Clerk of the Court, rather than to the police. The revised guidelines and program materials are currently being developed and will be distributed at a future date.

In the 2003/2004 reporting period, a total of 2,654 Victim Impact Statements were completed and 2,333 statements were forwarded to the Crown Prosecutor's Office. This was a 13% decrease in the number of Victim Impact Statements completed and the number forwarded to the Crown compared to 2002/2003. Of these statements completed, the majority (53%) concerned common assault, sexual assault and domestic assault (Figure 7). *Note: The difference in number completed and number forwarded occurs because a charge must be laid before statements are forwarded to the Crown.*

Figure 7



Requesting Restitution Program

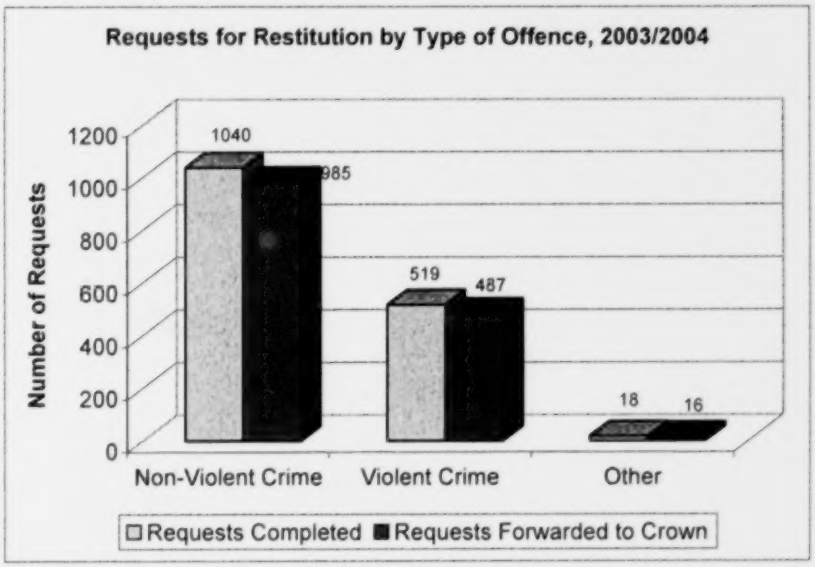
The Requesting Restitution Program provides victims of crime who have suffered a financial loss with information about how they can request that the offender pay restitution. A crime victim may complete a Request for Restitution Form provided by the police officer investigating the case or a victim support worker. Once the form is completed, the victim returns it to police, who then forwards it to the Crown prosecutor. The Crown Prosecutor may make the application for restitution to the Court, or may decline to do so. If the Crown declines, the victim may request the Court to do so on its own motion.

Restitution may be ordered for damage, destruction and loss of property, bodily harm, expenses incurred in moving out of the offender's house, as in spousal abuse cases, or for losses incurred by unknowingly

purchasing or lending money on stolen property.

For the 2003/2004 year, 1,577 Requests for Restitution were completed and returned to police and of these, 1,488 were forwarded to the Crown. This represents a decrease of 9% and 7%, respectively, from 2002/2003. The majority of the completed and returned to police Requests for Restitution concerned Non-Violent Crime (66%), with the next largest category being Violent Crime (33%). The category Other accounted for 1% of requests for restitution completed and returned to police. (Fig. 8)

Figure 8



Victim Assistance Coordinator Training

In 2003/2004, 55 participants attended Victim Assistance Coordinators' Training. Several training sessions were delivered to participants including victim service unit program coordinators, victim advocates, police members, Court Services staff, Criminal Justice Divisions of Alberta Justice staff, Alberta Solicitor General Public Security Division staff, and Aboriginal representatives. A victim awareness training seminar was conducted during probation officer training.

The training provides information about the criminal justice system, federal and provincial legislation concerning victims of crime, and information on related programs to assist victims in Alberta.

Victim Awareness Handbook

The Victim Awareness Handbook was developed as a "hands-on" resource that is used to inform people who provide services to victims of crime with information about issues facing victims. In 2003/04, 235 Handbooks were distributed to Crown Prosecutors offices throughout Alberta.

Victim Advocate Training Manual

In 2002, Alberta Solicitor General distributed the *Victim Advocate Training Manual* to victim service units throughout Alberta. The Manual establishes a provincial standard for Victim Advocate training, and creates an opportunity for Victim Advocates to become certified. In 2003/2004, 181 Victim Advocates received certification from the Justice/Solicitor General Staff College.

Quarterly Report Form

Since April 1, 1998, victim service programs have been required to complete the Victim Services Quarterly Report. This statistical collection form provides Alberta Solicitor General with information about services provided to victims and acts as a measure of accountability for grant monies awarded. The Quarterly Report has standardized the reporting process and improved the quality of information collected about services provided to victims in Alberta.

Victims of Crime Website

The enhanced Solicitor General website was launched in March, 2004. The website now has its own distinctive homepage and contains user-friendly information. The Victims of Crime section of the website contains a wide range of information on victims' programs and services in Alberta including:

- Help for Victims of Crime;
- Financial Benefits Program;
- Victim Program Grants;
- Requesting Restitution; and
- Contact Information for Victim Service Units, Community Programs, and the Victims Services Branch, Solicitor General.

Brochures

A series of brochures designed to increase awareness of programs available to victims of crime and to provide specific information on victim impact statements, restitution and financial benefits was distributed to police services, victim services units and other agencies that provide assistance to victims of crime.

APPENDIX A

ALBERTA POLICE BASED VICTIM SERVICE UNITS

CONTACT US

To obtain copies of brochures go to http://www.dbf.com/mktg/acsc/request_ext.asp. For additional information, contact Alberta Solicitor General at:

Victims Programs
Public Security Division
10th Floor, John E. Brownlee Building
10365 – 97 Street
Edmonton AB T5J 3W7
Phone: (780) 427-3460 (local calls) or
310-0000 (toll-free within Alberta) or
through our web-site at http://www.solgen.gov.ab.ca/victim/default.aspx